


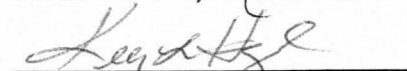
Self Silencing in Children and Adolescents

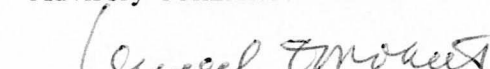
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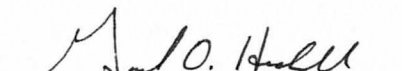
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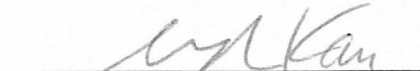

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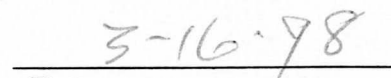

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" Self Silencing in Children and Adolescents "

A

Thesis

Presented to the Faculty
of the University of Alaska Fairbanks
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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By

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Abstract

Self silencing is the theorized tendency to abnormally suppress expression of one's own needs for the sake of a significant relationship. Thought to be a predominately female behavior, self silencing has mainly been empirically studied in adults and has been associated with depression in women. To determine the extent, the approximate age of onset and the gender distribution of self silencing behavior in boys and girls, the Silencing the Self Scale (STSS) (Jack & Dill, 1992) was administered to twelfth grade students, and a modified version of this scale for children (STSS-C) was developed, tested and administered to fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade students. No significant differences in self silencing were observed between genders at any grade level. However significant age related differences in self silencing behavior were demonstrated in both boys and girls. In addition, these age related patterns differed significantly between boys and girls.

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Case studies have described adolescent girls who suppress expression of their own thoughts and feelings for the sake of securing significant interpersonal relationships (Brown, 1991; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1991; Jack, 1991). This phenomenon, termed "self silencing," appears to emerge during preadolescence and lasts well into adulthood. Self silencing is characterized by loss of independence, loss of autonomy, and dependence upon one's relationships for affirmation of self. Women who self silence suppress fulfillment of their own needs and feelings as the price they must pay to preserve their relationships. It has been suggested that this pattern of behavior predisposes these women to depression (Jack, 1991).

A longitudinal study of 12 depressed women reported a frequent reference to a "loss of self" (Jack, 1991). This loss of self consisted of 3 components. First, loss of self coincided with a figurative loss of voice, a loss of the ability to express one's thoughts and feelings. Secondly, loss of self described the self imposed suppression of expression that accompanied adaptation to a new, significant role such as becoming a partner in a relationship. This suppression of expression also accompanied their attempts to become what they perceived to be society's model of a good woman. Third, loss of self resulted from inhibition of speaking out for fear of being wrong.

These recurrent themes of self sacrifice, wanting to please, compliance, and attachment, are all culturally defined as feminine. It is suggested that cultural pressures may be the root cause of self silencing (Jack, 1991). There are cultural differences in the treatment of boys and girls that cause girls in particular to fall victim to self

silencing. For example, it is culturally acceptable for boys to learn to disassociate themselves from relationships and become autonomous, independent thinking individuals. Girls, in contrast, learn that to achieve acceptance in society they must maintain relationships at the expense of independence. Their value is derived from the relationships they are in.

Further support for the proposition that self silencing occurs as a result of cultural pressures comes from a field research study in 2 middle schools in Northern California. Although self silencing behavior appears to occur as a result of an internal conflict between themselves and the relationships they are in, it seems that adolescent girls are rewarded for behavior that characterizes self silencing. It was discovered that girls incorporate a "hidden curriculum" in addition to the scholastic curriculum (Orenstein, 1994). Girls learn from their peers, parents and teachers to inhibit and even censor certain behaviors that are not condemned in boys. For instance, while boys may be scolded for being too aggressive at answering questions in the classroom - talking out of turn, or not raising their hand - girls are harshly reprimanded. Girls learn that either they shouldn't share what they know, or not reveal what they don't know, further suppressing self confidence. Girls will only answer questions where they are confident of the answer, and sometimes not even then. In addition, during the time when boys and girls are becoming aware of emerging sexual desires, boys are free to express their feelings, indeed encouraged to do so. However, girls learn that they must attract but not desire boys. Finally, as girls incorporate all of these messages, including

denying feelings of sexuality, aggressiveness, and their intelligence for fear of being called a “slut,” “bitch” or “schoolgirl” respectively, they become more self conscious, and inhibited. The result can be eating disorders and even self mutilation.

In addition to the cultural influences at school from peers and teachers, it has been suggested that girls look to their mothers and other adult women for guidance into the interrelational world. They learn from their role models to frame their interpersonal conflicts in terms of having to choose between themselves and their relationship with the other person (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Lerner, 1987).

Further support for the suggestion that cultural pressures lead to self silencing in girls was reported in a case study where adolescent girls were observed to reject their own knowledge and perceptions, and negate their insights and thoughts stemming from their observations (Stern, 1991). This phenomenon is called “disavowing the self,” and suggests a basis for self silencing. By disavowing any views that might cause conflict, girls attempt to protect themselves from discord that they fear could damage their relationships.

Self silencing has not been observed in young girls, i.e., second grade (Brown & Gilligan, 1992), suggesting that self silencing is “learned” during adolescence. For example, a case study consisting of mostly white, middle class girls found that second grade girls resolved their interpersonal problems in ways that took care of themselves as well as their relationships (Brown, 1991). However, girls who were once independent, autonomous, felt quite secure in their interpretations of their life

experiences, and who spoke confidently of their thoughts and feelings, began in preadolescence to negate what they learned of healthy relationships as children, such as speaking openly and frankly about needs and feelings (Bernandez, 1991; Brown, 1991; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1991; Stern, 1990).

These findings were supported by another case study where girls attending a private school were interviewed several times during the transition from childhood to adolescence (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). Again, the majority of the girls were white and middle to upper-class with only 14% being nonwhite, and 20% from working class families who attended the school on scholarships. In agreement with the previous study, these girls exhibited a dramatic transformation of approaches to friendships and other relationships, from self assured and independent, to censoring any behaviors or expressions of thoughts that they believed might compromise the relationship

Self silencing has been studied in mostly white, middle and upper class American girls. The prevalence of self silencing (as has been defined) is not known in girls of other classes or of non-white ethnic origins, or in boys. What is suspected is that blacks and other minorities do not self silence or lose voice in quite the same way as white girls do (Orenstein, 1994). However, they do seem to behave in ways that indicate that they feel the effects of social pressure to comply with appropriate gender behavior. For instance, although black girls are more vocal about expressing needs than white girls, they frequently feel that other's don't know their real selves - one element of self silencing.

Although it is also not known whether self silencing occurs in boys, it has been suggested that boys and girls have relational crises at different points in their lives. According to Gilligan (1991), girls approach this crises during adolescence when they yearn for the feeling of autonomy and independence once experienced, and are now pressured to nurture and maintain relationships. Boys face this crisis when they are still young, reluctantly disassociating themselves from their relationships to become independent (Gilligan, 1991).

Self silencing in young girls has been studied through case study methods. To observe this behavior in adults, Jack (1991) developed the Silencing the Self Scale to detect gender-specific schema associated with depressed women. The instrument was tested on 3 populations: undergraduate females, women from 3 battered women's shelters, and 270 women involved in a pregnancy and health study (Jack & Dill, 1992). A positive correlation between self silencing and depression was found. In addition, the scale was found to be an effective tool for exploring the tendency of women to incorporate socially constructed gender norms as guides for behavior, self evaluation, and the significance of having interpersonal relationships.

The Silencing the Self Scale (STSS) has been used to study populations of male and female college students (Gratch, Bassett & Attra, 1995; Stevens & Galvin, 1995), as well as couples (Thompson, 1995). Two of these studies (Stevens & Galvin, 1995; Thompson, 1995) found that men actually self silenced more than women. Both studies found a positive correlation to the Beck Depression Inventory, coinciding with

Jack's findings. Stevens and Galvin confirmed Jack's original STSS subscales using factor analysis. Although the factor analysis did confirm the subscales, revision was suggested regarding specific items of the subscales (Stevens & Galvin, 1995).

The Silencing the Self Scale assesses attributes in adult women that Gilligan, Stern, and many others have discovered in young, adolescent girls. The purpose of the current study was to empirically explore self silencing in children at the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. Based on the above research, girls should show an increase in self silencing as they get older, and boys should not show evidence of self silencing similar to that seen in girls. Specifically, the following hypothesis were tested:

Hypothesis 1: twelfth grade girls will self silence significantly more than twelfth grade boys.

Hypothesis 2: Girls will exhibit increased self silencing behavior at each progressive grade level.

Hypothesis 3: Boys will not exhibit increased self silencing behavior at each progressive grade level.

Hypothesis 4: fourth grade girls and boys do not differ significantly in self silencing behavior.

Methods

Design

To determine the level of self silencing in boys and girls in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades, a cross sectional, randomized paper and pencil survey was

conducted. Either of two survey instruments, both modified versions of the Silencing the Self Scale (Jack, 1991), and a demographic survey (See Appendix A) was administered to participants.

Participants

The target population consisted of students in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. This population provided a large sample pool of subjects which included subpopulations of various ethnic backgrounds and generally equal proportions of both genders. Four fourth and eighth grade classrooms, and six twelfth grade classes were selected. To assure normal population sampling, none of the classes were designated by the school district to be "special" in any way. All principles, teachers, and students were self selected and volunteered to participate. The twelfth grade students were chosen from three economics classes, a subject that is required of all high school students. The entire sample population consisted of 70% White, 5.4 % Black, 5.4% Native Alaskan, 3.4% Hispanic, 1.5% Asian and 15.1 % who felt that their ethnicity was not represented in the preceding categories or it included more than one of the categories listed. The entire sample population consisted of 61 fourth, 41 eighth, and 104 twelfth grade students (Appendix B).

Measurement

Silencing the Self Scale (STSS). The STSS was designed to detect gender-specific schemas in adult women (Jack & Dill, 1992). It is a 31 item, five point Likert

scale, rating the subject's agreement to the item from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Five items are reversed to control for response bias.

The scale consists of four rationally derived subscales (Jack, 1991). (See Appendix C for a list of the questions within the subscales.) Externalized Self-Perception assesses the extent to which a person judges him or herself on some external standard. Care as Self-Sacrifice assesses the extent to which a person puts the needs of someone else before him or herself. Silencing the Self assesses the extent to which a person suppresses self-expression to avoid conflict in a relationship. Divided Self assesses the presence of a compliant front while growing angry and defiant.

The STSS originally demonstrated a test-retest reliability of $r = .88, .89$, and $.93$ on three different groups of subjects: undergraduate women, pregnant women, and battered women, respectively. The scale was subsequently administered to populations consisting primarily of college students (Thompson, 1995; Stevens & Galvin, 1995; Gratch et al., 1995). The results of which generally confirmed the subscales with only a few exceptions (Stevens & Galvin, 1995).

In the current study, a slightly modified version of the full 31 item STSS was administered to twelfth grade students. The modification was necessary in order to make the instrument appropriate for a high school age group. For example, the term "partner" was changed to "those close to you" or to "friends" (Appendix D).

Silencing the Self Scale for Children (STSS-C). To assess self silencing in younger children, the STSS was modified to accommodate a fourth grade reading,

comprehension, and developmental level. Based on preliminary interviews with fourth grade students, the number of items was reduced from 31 to 12. Three criteria were used to select the particular items to be included in the STSS-C: 1) the published loading value of the individual items (Stevens & Galvin, 1995), 2) suitability to fourth grade comprehension levels, and 3) how well the items reflected the subscales. After the items were selected, they were reviewed for reading and comprehension level by child development specialists, school counselors, several fourth grade teachers, and two elementary school principals. The 12 item scale was then pilot tested on 19 fourth grade students. This preliminary analysis revealed that many of the STSS questions were too abstract for fourth grade students, most of whom have not yet achieved the transition from concrete to abstract thinking. Therefore, it was necessary to modify the questions for simplicity as well as for appropriate developmental level by making the questions more concrete. For example, the children were asked to describe what was meant by the statement, "It is my job to take care of my friend's feelings." The original intent of this question - to assess the degree of responsibility for the feelings of others - was difficult to translate to a child, and the examples the children gave described emotional support for a friend. Therefore, this particular item was eliminated from the STSS-C instrument. The final version was an 11 item, five point, Likert scale rating agreement from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with two reverse scored items (Appendix E). This instrument was administered to the fourth and eighth grade students, and twelfth grade students who did not receive the 31 item version.

Procedure

This study was approved by the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Institutional Review Board and by the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. Informed consent was obtained from participants aged 18 or older and from the parents of all study participants under the age of 18 (See Appendix F).

The scales were administered in the classrooms during class time. Upon receipt of the consent/assent form, each participant received a demographic data sheet and either the Silencing the Self Scale (STSS) or the Silencing the Self Scale for Children (STSS-C). To insure consistency, the same instructions were given to all participants completing the same instrument (Appendix G and H). The average time needed to complete the survey was about 15 minutes. The students who did not participate, were either sent to another room, or had an alternative assignment at the discretion of the teacher.

Preliminary Analysis: Scale Development and Assessment

STSS. Internal reliability analysis of the 31 item STSS produced a Chronbach's alpha of .84. Principle Component analysis with varimax rotation and four factor solution revealed 3 factors that differed from those previously published (Jack & Dill, 1992; Stevens & Galvin, 1995). As shown in Table 1, factor 1 resembled the Silencing the Self subscale reasonably well, but three items loading in this factor were originally from other subscales. Factor 2 was largely in agreement with the Externalized Self Perception subscale, however, Divided Self items factored heavily

with it. Factor 3 consisted almost entirely of Care as Self Sacrifice items with the exception of a single item from Divided Self. Factor 4 consisted of items remaining from three subscales and had the weakest alpha level. Care as Self Sacrifice items were split between Factors 3 and 4. The Divided Self subscale was the most fragmented loading on all 4 factors.

Due to the fragmentation, the Divided Self items were completely removed for a separate factor analysis. This resulted in three factors that highly agreed with the remaining subscales as published (Table 2). However, reliabilities for each of the subscales were not as high as in the four factor solution. Overall, reliability for the 24 item scale was .78. Despite the better agreement among the subscales achieved by removal of Divided Self items, all 4 subscales were used for the subsequent hypothesis testing in order to enable comparison of the results from this study with the results of the original published study.

STSS-C. Overall reliability of the 11 items initially proposed for the STSS-C was an alpha of .55 (See Appendix I for the entire correlation matrix of STSS-C). Principle Component analysis with varimax rotation produced a four factor solution (Table 3). Factors with more than two items were evaluated for reliability. Factor 1 resulted in an adequate alpha of .64. However, there was little agreement between this factor and apriori subscales. (For a list of items and apriori subscales, see Appendix J). Items from subscale 2 and 4 factored together. Although factor 2 consisted entirely of

Table 1
 Principle Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Silencing the Self Scale: 4 Factor Solution.

Factor Statistics		Factors			
		1	2	3	4
Eigenvalue		20.8	9.1	8.0	6.6
% of Variance		20.8	29.9	37.9	44.5
Chronbach's alpha		.80	.78	.75	.53
Mean inter-item r		.25	.34	.34	.16

Item No.	Jack's Sub-Scales	Factor Loading				Commonality
24.	3.	.83	-.05	-.16	.08	.72
14.	3.	.68	.09	.18	-.05	.51
15.	3.	.63	.01	-.38	.03	.55
30.	3.	.62	.20	.17	-.09	.42
26.	3.	.57	.38	.20	-.06	.52
2.	3.	.57	.14	.15	.19	.40
18.	3.	.55	.13	.12	-.30	.43
19.	4.	.53	.23	.15	-.03	.36
25.	4.	.45	.41	-.00	.06	.38
23.	1.	.37	.26	.33	-.29	.40
20.	3.	.22	.01	.21	-.16	.12
8.	3.	.21	-.02	.14	.09	.07
31.	1.	-.02	.73	0.11	-.12	.56
13.	4.	.17	.72	.23	.29	.69
7.	1.	.16	.71	-.15	-.06	.55
27.	1.	.25	.60	.14	.31	.54
17.	4.	.03	.60	-.00	-.04	.36
5.	4.	.37	.60	.15	-.09	.52
6.	1.	.28	.42	.24	-.41	.48
10.	2.	-.14	-.02	.70	.26	.58
9.	2.	.24	-.10	.70	.05	.56
29.	2.	.16	-.02	.67	.01	.48
3.	2.	.19	.06	.61	.08	.42
16.	4.	.08	.41	.59	-.09	.53
22.	2.	.04	.40	.47	.08	.38
21.	4.	.00	.35	-.16	.70	.63
1.	2.	-.02	-.22	.09	.68	.52
12.	2.	-.08	.08	.19	.47	.27
28.	1.	.24	.36	.31	.40	.44
4.	2.	.04	-.10	.15	.40	.19
11.	2.	.03	.09	-.27	.32	.19

Note: Jack's Subscale 1 = Externalized Self Perception
 Jack's Subscale 2 = Care as Self Sacrifice

Jack's Subscale 3 = Silencing the Self
 Jack's Subscale 4 = Divided Self

Table 2

Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Silencing the Self Scale: 3 Factor Solution

<u>Factor Statistics</u>		<u>Factors</u>			
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	
Eigenvalue		4.7	2.6	1.8	
% of Variance		19.6	11.0	7.7	
Chronbach's alpha		.776	.656	.456	
Mean inter-item r		.294	.181	.125	

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Jack's Subscale</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>			<u>Commonality</u>
30.	3	.73	.07	-.00	.53
14.	3	.72	.12	.13	.55
24.	3	.71	-.18	.05	.54
26.	3	.68	.13	.24	.53
15.	3	.59	-.36	.03	.48
2.	3	.56	.24	.08	.38
18.	3	.56	.13	.31	.43
8.	3	.24	.08	-.05	.07
20.	3	.20	.20	.11	.09
10.	2	-.03	.72	-.23	.58
9.	2	.33	.62	-.26	.56
3.	2	.18	.61	.00	.40
22.	2	.11	.55	.16	.34
29.	2	.24	.54	-.18	.39
28.	1	.20	.51	.28	.37
12.	2	-.18	.48	.11	.28
11.	2	.05	-.14	-.08	.03
31.	1	-.01	.05	.74	.55
7.	1	.15	.06	.64	.44
6.	1	.24	.17	.59	.44
1.	2	-.02	.25	-.48	.29
27.	1	.25	.39	.40	.38
23.	1	.39	.29	.40	.39
4.	2	.04	.25	-.28	.15

Note: Jack's Subscale 1 = Externalized Self Perception
 Jack's Subscale 2 = Care as Self Sacrifice
 Jack's Subscale 3 = Silencing the Self

subscale 3 items, it had a low alpha of .40. Due to the low inter-correlation of items, a smaller scale was developed using items from Factor 1 with the addition of item 7. The alpha level of this five item STSS-C was improved to .65 (Table 4). This five item STSS-C was used in testing the hypotheses of the study.

Results

Self Silencing in Twelfth Grade Students (31 Item STSS)

To test the hypothesis that twelfth grade girls self silence significantly more than twelfth grade boys (Hypothesis 1), the scores of the students on the STSS were compared using an independent sample t-test. This analysis revealed no significant difference in self silencing between boys ($M = 2.48$, $SD = .46$) and girls ($M = 2.5$, $SD = .55$) at the twelfth grade level $t(48) = .26$, $p > .05$. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Self Silencing Across Grade Levels and Gender

To determine if there were age differences in self silencing, the scores on the STSS-C were compared. A 2-way ANOVA indicated significant main effects of grade $F(2, 141) = 13.1$, $p < .01$, but not for gender $F(1, 142) = .434$, $p > .05$. In addition, there was a significant gender by grade interaction: $F(5, 138) = 6.66$, $p < .01$. A Student-Newman-Keuls post analysis revealed that fourth grade students self silenced significantly more than eighth or twelfth grade students. These results indicate that

Table 3

Principle Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Initial Items for the Silencing the Self Scale for Children.

		Factors				
		1	2	3	4	
Eigenvalue		21.8	12.9	11.3	9.9	
% of Variance		21.8	34.7	46.0	55.9	
Chronbach's alpha		.64	.40	.22	-.12	
Mean inter-item r		.31	.18			
Item No.	Predicted Subscales	Factor Loading				Communality
3	4	.76	.07	.17	-.13	.63
6	2	.71	-.22	-.15	.19	.62
11	4	.63	.37	.10	-.16	.57
1	2	.56	.16	.34	.33	.54
2	3	.22	.75	-.23	.06	.67
9	3	.03	.65	.24	.06	.49
8	3	-.14	.36	.35	-.10	.28
4	4	.10	-.05	.74	-.24	.61
7	2	.23	.08	.65	.36	.61
5	1	-.05	.28	-.13	.69	.57
10	3	-.04	.38	-.04	.61	.52

Note: Subscale 1 = Externalized Self Perception
 Subscale 2 = Care as Self Sacrifice
 Subscale 3 = Silencing the Self
 Subscale 4 = Divided Self

Table 4

Five Item STSS-C Means, Standard Deviation and Inter-Item Correlations.

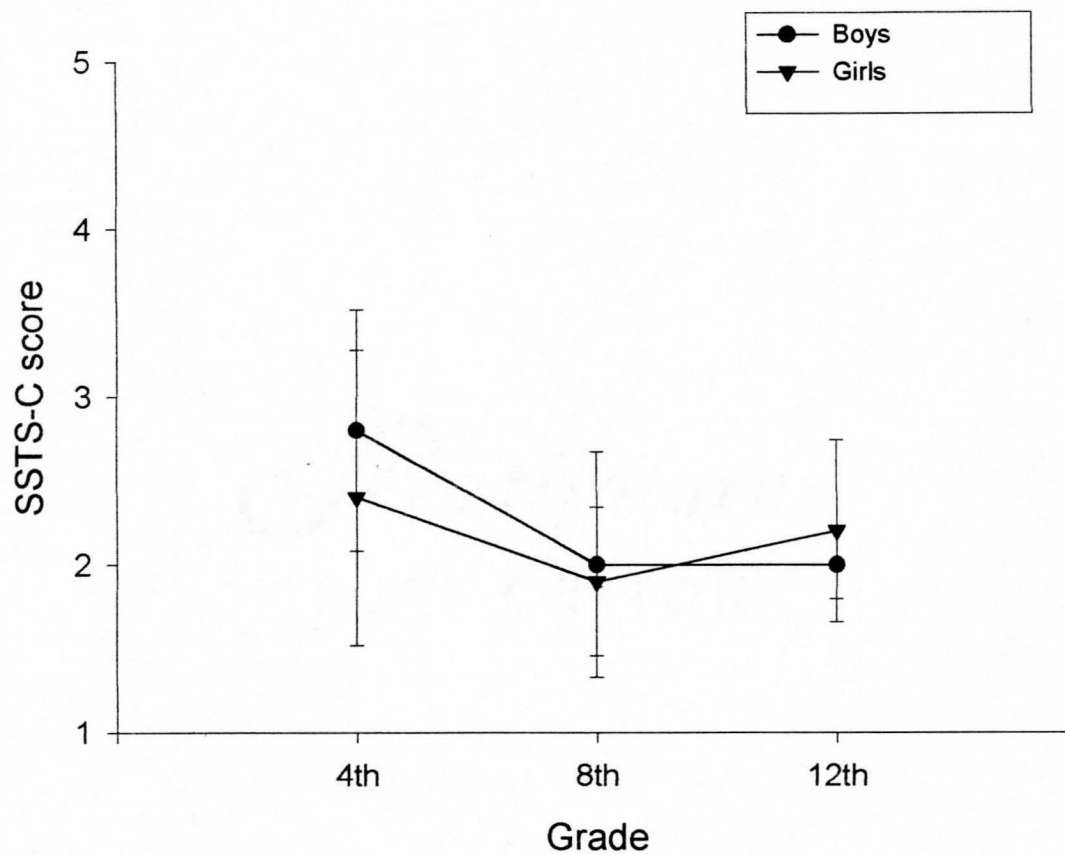
ITEM	M	SD	CORRELATION				
			1	3	6	7	11
1. I do whatever my friends want to do as long as they are happy.	2.7	.93	1.0				
3. I feel I have to act in a way that will make my friends like me.	1.9	1.1	.29	1.0			
6. Caring is doing what my friends want even when I want to do something different.	2.3	1.1	.34	.33	1.0		
7. It is up to me to make sure my friends are happy.	2.3	1.1	.38	.22	.09	1.0	
11. I act like my friends instead of acting like I want to.	1.8	1.1	.33	.44	.15	.17	1.0

overall, self silencing differed between grades, but not between boys and girls. Therefore, the results support Hypothesis 4 (i.e., that fourth grade girls and boys do not differ in self silencing behavior). Nevertheless, as with the results from the 31 item STSS, the results do not support Hypothesis 1 (i.e., that twelfth grade girls self silence significantly more than twelfth grade boys). However, the significant interaction indicates that the pattern of scores across grade levels differed significantly between boys and girls (Fig. 1). Because of this significant interaction, the 3 grade levels within each gender were compared.

To examine the patterns of self silencing among girls at different grade levels, a 1-way ANOVA was performed. This analysis demonstrated significant differences between grades for girls: $F(2,84) = 5.19, p < .05$. Post hoc analysis (Student-Newman-Keuls test) revealed that fourth and twelfth grade girls scored significantly higher than did the eighth grade girls. These results partially support Hypothesis 2 (i.e., that self silencing progressively increases in girls with increasing grade level) in that twelfth grade girls self silenced significantly more than eighth grade girls. However, the observation that fourth grade girls do not differ from twelfth grade girls in levels of self silencing does not support Hypothesis 2.

Figure 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Five Item STSS-C.



	4th		8th		12th	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Boys	2.8	.72	2.0	.67	2.0	.20
Girls	2.4	.88	1.9	.44	2.2	.54

Similar analysis for boys also demonstrated significant differences: $F(2,54) = 12.25$, $p < .05$. Post hoc analysis (Student-Newman-Keuls test) revealed that fourth grade boys scored significantly higher than did the both eighth and twelfth grade boys. For boys, these results support Hypothesis 3 (i.e., that self silencing in boys does not increase with increasing grade level). Indeed, self silencing significantly decreased from the fourth to the eighth grade, and scores remained relatively the same to the twelfth grade.

Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of this study was to determine the degree to which self silencing exists in a normal population of boys and girls over the age range from the fourth to the twelfth grades. No gender differences in self silencing were found at any grade level, however, age-related differences were demonstrated within each gender. In addition, these age related patterns of self silencing behavior differed between girls and boys. These findings partially support the hypotheses of this study in that self silencing behavior increased in an age related fashion between eighth and twelfth grade girls (although not between fourth and eighth or fourth and twelfth grade girls). Also, self silencing behavior did not increase in boys. Indeed, self silencing behavior in boys showed a significant decrease with age. Perhaps, developmentally, children at the fourth grade level are more dependent on their significant relationships for validation and therefore may prefer to not risk conflict.

Both forms of the STSS were administered to twelfth grade students and the scores from each of these instruments produced similar findings: that twelfth grade girls did not differ significantly from twelfth grade boys in self silencing behavior. These results suggest that self silencing may not be more of a problem for girls than boys in normal adolescent populations. However, this conclusion is based on the assumption that the STSS instruments are valid means for measuring self silencing for these populations.

The STSS was developed to assess self silencing behavior in depressed adult heterosexual women who were in a significant relationship or had experience with significant relationships. The objective was to understand women's behavior within these relationships in relation to their depression. Since the STSS was developed for use on a clinically depressed population, it may not be a valid measure of self silencing behavior in a normal population of children and adolescents.

In addition, the original STSS was adapted in the current study to fit the life circumstances of 17 and 18 year old students. References to significant relationships, for example, using the word "partner" were replaced with the word "friends." The concept and underlying meaning of the words may not be equivalent. Since self silencing has been primarily described in terms of behavior within significant relationships, this inexact substitution may account for some of the discrepancies found in the results as well as the principle component results. Consequently, a similar but better adapted instrument for adolescents may be necessary to understand exactly

the influence of gender socialization with regards to significant relationships and self silencing.

The results of the principle component analysis also warrant some discussion, particularly the stability of the subscales. Silencing the Self subscale assesses the extent to which a person suppresses self-expression to avoid conflict in a relationship. The items in this subscale factored well, suggesting that twelfth grade students interpret these questions in the same manner as the adults in the original study. These results suggest that this subscale of the STSS assesses self silencing effectively in adolescents.

Externalized Self-Perception presumably assesses the extent to which a person judges him or herself on some external standard. Items from this subscale factored heavily with the Divided Self items, perhaps because the items of both subscales are very similar in nature. Both reflect an external standard of measure. For example, an item from the Externalized Self Perception subscale, "I feel dissatisfied with myself because I should be able to do all the things people are supposed to be able to do these days" is very similar to an item from the Divided Self subscale, "I feel I have to act in a certain way to please the people I'm closest to." It is therefore possible for an adolescent, who has not experienced an adult significant relationship, to be unable to differentiate the subtle distinctions between these items.

One of the resulting factors consisted entirely of items from Care as Self-Sacrifice with the inclusion of one item from the Divided Self subscale: "Often I look happy enough on the outside, but I feel angry and rebellious." Care as Self-Sacrifice

items refer to behaviors such as making sure the other person is happy, not being selfish, and caring about the other person. This coincident factoring of the Divided Self item could reflect insincere selflessness. The students behave in a manner that they feel they *should* behave, but not necessarily how they *feel*. If in fact this is the case, this observation suggests that adolescents frequently behave in ways that they think is appropriate disregarding what they feel. Perhaps this is typical of this age group and that both boys and girls behave similarly.

The items in the Divided Self subscale produced the most fragmented factoring. Perhaps twelfth graders misinterpreted the questions, or did not have the same experiences as adults to draw from that would create a strong unification of the items. If they did, it seems to be in relation to items in other subscales leaving this subscale a very weak determination of Divided Self. Previous research (Stevens & Galvin, 1995) analyzing the structure of the STSS found that two items from other subscales loaded with the Divided Self subscale and that one Divided Self item loaded on another subscale. With the exception of these 3 items, the factors agreed with the original subscales. Consequently, similar to past research, the Divided Self subscale appears to have the least integrity of all the subscales. In summary, despite the strong reliability of the 31 item STSS as a whole, stability of item to subscale loadings was somewhat unstable, thereby making comparisons to the adult population for which the STSS was constructed difficult to draw.

The study revealed that the STSS-C in its entirety was not an internally reliable tool. However, by using a more internally reliable 5 item scale, the STSS-C maintained potential as evidenced by the ability to detect significant gender by grade interactions, and significant grade differences within each gender, as well as significant differences between grades. The elimination of 6 of the 11 items from the scale may be due to either sentence structure or children's comprehension of the items. The pilot study revealed that fourth grade students had great difficulty comprehending and then answering the reversed scored questions. There were two questions that were reversed scored, and neither item was in the condensed version of STSS-C. It is possible that this type of question is beyond the fourth grade level of comprehension. In addition, the original items were abstract in content, and had to be altered to accommodate concrete cognitive processes. It is possible that subtle nuances of the questions were lost in the translation.

The scale was created to be applicable to fourth grade life experiences as well as eighth and twelfth grade life experiences. This particular scale may not have adequately encompassed such a vast range of experiences between ages, not to mention the range of experiences between genders within the grades. Validation of STSS-C, and improving question wording for future research is indicated. There is a large maturity and developmental difference between fourth and twelfth grade students. Relationships and friendships may be developed and valued differently, causing inconsistent representation of the relevance of the items. Future studies could

benefit from an integration of quantitative and qualitative methods for scale development. A better understanding of the development and maintenance of friendships through small group discussions of both boys and girls of various ethnic backgrounds, may lead to a more content valid instrument that measures self silencing with regard to these relationships. Further, concurrent validity of the STSS-C could be determined by having twelfth graders answer both the STSS and the STSS-C in future research applications.

The current study was limited to a generally white population of students in Fairbanks, Alaska. Because participation was on a voluntary basis, the particular schools and their principals, teachers and students were all self selected. It is therefore possible that this selection process may have introduced unknown confounding variables. In addition, students were required to have a signed consent form without which participation could not be permitted. Many students, particularly eighth grade students forgot to take them home or bring them back which resulted in a low eighth grade participation rate, particularly eighth grade boys. Future studies might consider devising ways to compensate for these recruitment deficiencies.

Although demographic data was collected for the current study, the sample sizes of the various ethnic groups were too small to compare statistically. Generally, there has been little research on self silencing among minority children and adolescents. Future research could lead to a better understanding of the difference of the integration of these pressures according to culture and ethnic background.

Despite limitations, generally, the STSS and the five item STSS-C were effective tools for testing the proposed hypotheses. Self silencing theory implies that social pressures to conform to characteristically female behaviors result in self silencing. Therefore, girls and women should self silence more than boys and men. There has been research reported on college students and other adult populations (Gratch et al., 1995; Stevens & Galvin, 1995; Thompson, 1995) which failed to reveal significant gender differences in self silencing. In agreement with this previous work, the current study found no significant differences of self silencing between twelfth grade boys and girls.

Past research has indicated that younger girls—at or below the fourth grade level—reveal their thoughts and feelings with little hesitation and have greater autonomy and independence than older girls, and therefore should exhibit less self silencing (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1991; Jack, 1991). This prediction was not entirely borne out in the current study. Eighth grade girls showed significantly less self silencing than the fourth grade girls. However, there was a significant increase in self silencing between eighth and twelfth grade girls. This partially supports the theory that girls will exhibit increased self silencing behavior as they progress in grades.

Because self silencing theory is based on the incorporation of gender specific schemas, there is an implication that boys will not exhibit increased self silencing behavior. Due to the lack of past research of self silencing on boys, a comparison with

the current results is of course difficult. Nevertheless, current research does support the theory that boys will not self silence more as they age.

Again, theories state that young girls (fourth grade and younger) maintain the ability to speak openly and frankly within personal relationships, that is, exhibit little self silencing behavior (Brown, 1991; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1991). Theories also imply that boys will not exhibit self silencing behavior at all. Therefore, self silencing behavior will not differ between fourth grade girls and boys. Current research supports this theory.

Although recently there has been much case study evidence to support self silencing theory, the results of this study do not reveal a generally high prevalence of self silencing in children and adolescents. Perhaps a high level of self silencing as characterized in past studies exists for women and girls who are susceptible to depression and other disorders such as eating disorders. However, results of the research show that self silencing may not exist in a normal population, or that maybe everyone self silences to a degree and within certain circumstances. There are many situations in which people, especially children, will suppress thoughts and feelings in order not to cause conflict: children's roles regarding their parents, first date, relationships between co-workers, etc. It may be that either the STSS or the STSS-C is not sensitive enough to detect degrees of self silencing, or maybe self silencing as it has been defined is not as prevalent as has been theorized.

This study was an initial investigation using systematic empirical research to verify past case study and anecdotal evidence of self silencing. Although reliability and validity in the subscales were not ideal, overall, the study supports only some aspects of the self silencing theories. Further investigation through scale improvement, and further research using minorities is warranted. Finally, this study demonstrates the advantages of including both genders in self silencing research; delineation of gender-specific social demands on girls is not possible in the absence of comparable data on boys.

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Appendix A: Demographic Survey

Tell me how old you are:

My age: _____

Check one: I am female: _____ I am male: _____

Check one:

My ethnicity is:

Asian : _____

Black: _____

Hispanic: _____

Indian/Native Alaskan: _____

White Caucasian: _____

Check "other" if you can't check any of the above, or if you can check more than one of the above): Other: _____

Appendix B: Population Demographics

Population Demographics

	fourth	eighth	twelfth
Asian	1	1	1
Black	7	0	4
Hispanic	3	2	2
Indian/Native Alaskan	3	1	7
White	30	36	77
Other	17	1	13
Total	60	41	104

Appendix C: List of Questions Within the Subscales

The break down of the items in the Silencing The Self Scale according to the subscales.

Subscale 1: Externalized Self-Perception

- 6. I tend to judge myself by how I think other people see me.
- 7. I feel dissatisfied with myself because I think I should be able to do all the things that people are supposed to be able to do these days.
- 23. When I make decisions, other people's thoughts and opinions influence me more than my own thoughts and opinions.
- 27. I often feel responsible for other people's feelings.
- 28. I find it hard to know what I think and feel because I spend a lot of time thinking about what other people are feeling.
- 31. I never seem to measure up to the standards I set for myself.

Subscale 2: Cares as Self-Sacrifice

- *1. I think it is best to put myself first because no one else will look out for me.
- 3. Caring means putting the other person's needs in front of my own.
- 4. Considering my needs to be as important as those of the people I love is selfish.
- 9. In a close relationship, my responsibility is to make the other person happy.
- 10. Caring means choosing to do what the other person wants, even if I want to do something different.
- *11. In order to feel good about myself, I need to feel independent and self sufficient.
- 12. One of the worst things I could do is to be selfish.

22. Doing things just for myself is selfish.

29. In a close relationship, I usually don't care what we do as long as the other person is happy.

Subscale 3: Silencing the Self

2. I don't speak my feelings in an intimate relationship when I know they will cause disagreement.

*8. When my partner's needs and feelings conflict with my own, I always state mine clearly.

14. Instead of risking confrontations in close relationships, I would rather not rock the boat.

*15. I speak my feelings with my partner even if it leads to problems or disagreements.

18. When my partner's needs or opinions conflict with mine, rather than asserting my own point of view I usually end up agreeing with him/her.

20. When it looks as though certain of my needs can't be met in a relationship, I usually realize that they weren't very important anyway.

24. I rarely express my anger at those close to me.

26. I think it's better to keep my feelings to myself when they do conflict with my partner's.

30. I try to bury my feelings when I think they will cause trouble in my close relationships.

Subscale 4: Divided Self

5. I find it harder to be myself when I am in a close relationship than when I am on my own.

13. I feel I have to act in a certain way to please my partner.

16. Often I look happy enough on the outside, but inwardly I feel angry and rebellious.
17. In order for my partner to love me, I can't reveal certain things to him/her.
19. When I am in a close relationship, I lose my sense of who I am.
- *21. My partner loves and appreciates me for who I am.
25. I feel that my partner does not know my real self.

* Indicates reverse scored items.

Appendix D: Modified STSS

Please circle the number that best describes how you feel about each of the statements listed below.

Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree Nor disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------	-------------------

1. I think it is best to put myself first because no one else will look out for me.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. I don't speak my feelings when I know they will cause disagreement.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Caring means putting the other person's needs in front of my own.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Considering my needs to be as important as those of the people I love is selfish.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. I find it is harder to myself when I am with others than when I am on my own.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. I tend to judge myself by how I think other people see me.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. I feel dissatisfied with myself because I should be able to do all the things people are supposed to be able to do these days.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

8. When another person's needs and feeling conflict with my own, I always state mine clearly.

1 2 3 4 5

9. In a close relationship, my responsibility is to make the other person happy.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Caring means choosing to do what the other person wants, even when I want to do something different.

1 2 3 4 5

11. In order to feel good about myself, I need to feel I can do things on my own.

1 2 3 4 5

12. One of the worst things I can do is to be selfish.

1 2 3 4 5

13. I feel I have to act in a certain way to please some people.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Instead of risking confrontations, I would rather not rock the boat.

1 2 3 4 5

15. I speak my feeling with other people, even when it leads to problems or disagreements.

1 2 3 4 5

16. Often I look happy enough on the outside, but inwardly I feel angry and rebellious.

1 2 3 4 5

17. In order for others to love me, I cannot reveal certain things about myself to him/her.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55
56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85
86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95
96	97	98	99	100

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

26. I think it's better to keep my feelings to myself when they conflict with others.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Appendix E: STSS-C and Apriori Subscales

Please circle the answer that is most like you.

	Never		Sometimes		Always
Example:					
Whenever I want to go somewhere I run instead of walk.	1	2	3	4	5
1. I do whatever my friends want (2) to do as long as they are happy.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I say whatever I feel even if it (3) causes an argument.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel I have to act in a way that (4) will make my friends like me.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I feel that I have some friends who (4) don't know what I'm really like inside.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I don't worry about what my (1) friends think of me or of what I do.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Caring is doing what my friends want even when I want to do (2) something different.	1	2	3	4	5
7. It is up to me to make sure my (2) friends are happy.	1	2	3	4	5

	Never		Sometimes		Always
8. I will be nice to my friends even (3) if they do something I don't like.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I try not to say things that will (3) make my friends mad.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I feel I could do better in school, (3) at home, and everywhere I go.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I act like my friends instead of (4) acting like I want to.	1	2	3	4	5

Note: 1 = Externalized Self Perception
 2 = Care as Self Sacrifice
 3 = Silencing the Self
 4 = Divided Self

Appendix F: Consent Form

Parental Consent/Child or Minor Assent Form Self Expression in Children in the Fourth, Eighth, and Twelfth Grades

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am a graduate student in Community and Counseling Psychology at UAF. I am interested in the extent a student will allow their relationships to influence how much they will voice their thoughts and feelings. The students will be given 2 instruments in class, a survey called Silencing the Self Scale, and a demographic sheet asking age, grade, race and sibling order. Names are not asked on the survey. An example of the questions used on the scale would be "I usually go along with others, because I don't like to rock the boat."

At no time will the materials collected here be available to anyone except the researcher involved in this assessment, or for any other purpose than this project. The student will not be identified by name at any time, in any reports generated from this research. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you or your child are completely free to withdraw your consent and discontinue your child's participation at anytime.

As the results of this are completed, I will provide a report of the findings to the Fairbanks North Star School District, and one to each school that has participated.

This information will be available to you at any time by request. If you have any questions, please contact me at 356-3556. You may also contact Dr. Kelly Hazel, my thesis advisor, at 474-6961. If you have questions for the Institutional Review Board, the university organization which administers all research done under the aegis of UAF, contact the IRB chairman, Dr. Charles Geist at 474-7007.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, please sign this form, and allow your child to sign it in the appropriate place. Please return this form with your child to school within 1 week. A child without the consent form will not participate in the survey.

Thank you for your help,

Gena L. Walz

4353-9th ST.
Ft. Wainwright, AK 99703
(907) 356-3556

My signature indicates that I have read the information above and have given permission for my child to participate. My child's signature indicates that he or she understand that they will be answering questions on a survey and agrees to participate. I realize that I may withdraw my child (or my child may withdraw) without prejudice at any time after signing this from should either of us decide to do so.

I have decided to let my child participate in the survey: _____
Parent's Signature and Date

I agree to participate: _____
Child's Name (please print) Child's Signature

I have decided not to allow my child to participate in the survey: _____
Parent's Signature and Date

I don't want to participate: _____
Child's Name (please print) Child's Signature

Appendix G: Instructions for Fourth and Eighth Grade Students

Script for fourth and eighth graders.

Hello. My name is Gena Walz, you can call me Gena. I'm going to give you 2 pieces of paper that have questions on them. The first will ask you how old you are, what your nationality is, and if you are male or female. Don't put your names on these papers! On the second paper, I will ask you questions about you and your friendships. After each question, there are five possible answers: *Never* true for me, *Usually* not true for me, *Sometimes* true for me, *Almost* true for me, and *Always* true for me. You pick the one that fits you best for each question. For example, let's say that the question was: whenever I want to go somewhere, I run instead of walk. Then you would answer either, Never true for me - 1, mostly not true for me - 2 Sometimes true for me - 3, mostly true for me - 4 or always true for me 5. I will read each question one at a time, so don't go ahead of me. When I finish reading the questions, you will circle the answer that fits you best. If you have a question, raise your hand after I finish reading it, and I will help you. Are there any questions? Ready?, Here we go.

Appendix H: Instructions for Twelfth Grade Students

Script for twelfth graders.

Hello. My name is Gena Walz, you can call me Gena. I'm going to give you 2 pieces of paper that have questions on them. Some will have a longer survey than others.

I've given some of you 11 questions, and some of you 31 questions each survey asks the same type of questions. All of you have the same front page which asks you how old you are, what your nationality is, and if you are male or female. Don't put your names on these papers! The second paper, will ask you questions about you and your friendships. After each question, there are five possible answers: *Never* like me,

Usually not like me, *Sometimes* like me, *Almost* always like me, and *Always* like me.

You pick the one that fits you best for each question and circle it. For example, let's say that the question was: whenever I want to go somewhere, I run instead of walk.

Then you would answer either, Never like me - 1, mostly not like me - 2 Sometimes like me - 3, mostly like me - 4 or always like me 5. If you have a question, raise your hand, and I will help you. Are there any questions? Ready? Here we go.

Appendix I: STSS-C Means, Standard Deviation and Correlaiton Table

STSS-C Means, Standard Deviation and Correlation Table.

ITEM	M	SD	CORRELATIONS										
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	2.7	.93											
2	2.9	1.3	.12										
3	1.9	1.1	.29	.17									
4	2.5	1.2	.11	-.04	.23								
5	2.9	1.1	.08	.15	.00	-.09							
6	2.3	1.1	.34	.02	.33	-.05	.01						
7	2.3	1.1	.38	.02	.22	.22	.09	.09					
8	3.1	1.1	.08	.08	.04	.13	.00	-.08	.00				
9	3.6	1.2	.22	.32	.07	.08	-.00	.01	.20	.13			
10	3.4	1.2	-.05	.08	.01	.02	-.12	-.15	-.04	.05	.14		
11	1.8	1.1	.33	.29	.44	.17	.06	.15	.17	.10	.13	.10	